

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

WILDLIFE WATERING FACILITY

(no.)

CODE 648

DEFINITION

Develop, improve, or modify watering places and systems for wildlife.

PURPOSE

- To provide adequate drinking water, during critical periods, for wildlife.
- To create or expand suitable habitat for wildlife.
- To improve water quality and accessibility for wildlife.

CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES

In areas where new, additional, or improved watering places are needed to increase the range, distribution, improve the habitat of, or attract wildlife by meeting their water requirements.

Where lack of adequate water has been identified as the limiting habitat component.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

- Because each facility is unique to species, habitat, topography, and climate; watering facilities must be planned and installed according to a plan and adapted to the specific site.
- Methods used will be designed to protect the soil resource from erosion

- Design shall be sized to accommodate the expected and/or anticipated consumptive rates of target and non-target species.
- Facilities shall be protected from livestock damage.
- The facility must provide permanent, accessible, dependable, and suitable quality water for the critical period.
- The distribution and spacing of facilities shall be based on topography, required travel distance to water and the home range, territory size, and distribution of the target species.
- Ramps shall be installed in open water troughs and tanks when necessary for access and escape.
- Design shall include appropriate safety features to minimize the hazards of the facility.
- Management measures shall be provided to control invasive species and noxious weeds.
- Facilities shall be designed and installed in compliance with all State and federal laws including water rights and permits if needed.
- Disturbed areas shall be vegetated according to a revegetation plan using native plant materials.

CONSIDERATIONS

General Considerations

- Consider the effects on the target species and the ecosystem by concentrated grazing, predation, hunting etc.
- Consider the accessibility of the site for installation and maintenance.
- Consider any effects upon natural springs and associated unique flora and fauna.
- Consider the aesthetics of the installation.

Water Quantity Considerations

- Consider the effects on downstream flows or groundwater that could affect other water users or associated aquatic sites.

Water Quality Considerations

- Consider the effects on wetlands or other aquatic sites.
- Consider the existence and maintenance of suitable water quality for the target species.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be prepared in accordance with the criteria of this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Facilities shall be checked periodically to insure proper function. Repair and maintain as needed.

Inspect the area adjacent to the facility to make sure the area is well protected with desirable vegetation and not subject to erosion or deposition. Correct as needed.

Facilities not designed to withstand or operate during freezing weather shall be winterized prior to winter conditions.

Periodically monitor water quality to insure acceptable water quality. Maintain as needed.